



Volunteer Zambia - Northumbria University announces student and staff volunteers for summer 2020

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## Sport to promote economic and social development in Zambia

**A cohort of five students and staff from Northumbria University will visit Zambia next summer to take part in the [Volunteer Zambia](#) programme, an initiative that Northumbria has played a significant role in over the last 15 years.**

Supported by senior Government ministers and officials, such as Bessie Chelemu, Director of Sport for Zambia's Ministry of Youth, Sport, Culture & Child Development and Northumbria alumna, Volunteer Zambia is an

international volunteering programme that uses sport as a tool to engage, educate and empower thousands of young people in Zambia and the UK.

Sport can have a hugely positive impact on impoverished communities and can be used as a tool to empower young people and promote physical and mental health and well-being, as well as build social cohesion within a country.

The programme, formerly known as *Zambian IDEALS*, is run by the Wallace Group – a partnership created by several leading UK universities, including Northumbria, to support sports development for young people in Zambia.

Today the partnership encompasses eight universities, UK Sport, two national governing bodies, Volleyball England and England Netball, Volunteer Zambia's principal charity, The Perfect Day Foundation, and key Zambian partner, the NGO Sport in Action.

Upholding a commitment to the establishment and sustainable practices of International Development, the group works with Sport in Action to help deliver development programmes to thousands of children each week; and the Zambian government, and other sport stakeholders to support the delivery of Zambia's strategy for sport.

Each year since 2006, Northumbria University has sent several students to Lusaka, Zambia's capital, for six-week periods during which they work with sports leaders in the local community and coach sessions with youngsters in various sports including football, netball, basketball and volleyball. Students studying Architecture and Built Environment courses have also taken placements in Zambia to renovate a set of tennis courts providing a long term, high quality facility open to the whole community.

As a collective, the Wallace Group provides students and staff in Zambia for 18 weeks across the summer plus 'team leaders', who are graduates, all year round.

Commenting on the success of the partnership, Katy Storie, Northumbria's Head of Sport and Exercise, said: "It's fantastic to be heading into the 15th year of the project. Over the years we've had such a diverse mix of students and staff involved in so many ways including coaching, facility development,

fundraising and research projects.

"The experiences gained through this cultural exchange are truly life changing and has had a lasting impact on our students and staff as well as the people we work with over in Lusaka. I'm looking forward to the next 15 years and how we continue to develop this unique partnership."

All of the students who participate in the Volunteer Zambia programme are volunteers and are required to fundraise to fund their placements and ensure the project remains sustainable over the long term.

Ahead of International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social and Development, Northumbria's 2020 volunteers have been announced as Applied Sport Science with Coaching student Jessica Hamer, Harry Fairhurst, who is studying Business with Accounting, Construction Engineering Management student Joe Mackrell and Elise Richmond who is in her second year studying Applied Sport and Exercise Science.

Elise Richmond said: "Volunteer Zambia is a once in a lifetime opportunity that I felt I couldn't pass on. I have always been interested in the possibility of going to Zambia to work with those from a very different culture to ours in particular. Having had experience in coaching my peers, I hope to expand on my skills and gain further experience in working with children."

Harry Fairhurst will be coaching football in Zambia: "I initially decided to take part in the Zambia Project to pursue a coaching interest. My main motive is now the opportunity it provides local children in Zambia. The project has given me a push to engage within the local community and will provide valuable experience for fundraising and charity work in the future."

Northumbria's recently appointed Head of Women's Football, Becky Langley, who is also First Team Manager at Newcastle United Women, has been selected as the supporting staff member who will assist the students with their fundraising events and activities in the lead up to their visit to Zambia. Becky will then also travel to Lusaka for three weeks in summer to deliver football coaching.

To find out more about sport at Northumbria, visit [www.northumbria.ac.uk/sport](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/sport)

Learn more about the [Volunteer Zambia](#) project.

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## Contacts



### **Rik Kendall**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences

[rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk)

07923 382339



### **Andrea Slowey**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences

[andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk)

07708 509436



### **James Fox**

Press Contact

Student Communications Manager

[james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk)



**Kelly Elliott**

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

[kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk)



**Rachael Barwick**

Press Contact

PR and Media Manager

[rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk)

07377422415



**Ruth Lognonne**

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

[ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:ruth.lognonne@northumbria.ac.uk)

07971274253



**Gemma Brown**

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

[gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk)